

*Executive Director's Message*

# Partnering to Share Our Deeper Understandings



*RRCNA Executive Director Judy Johnson*

As you are aware, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed in December 2015, moves substantial parts of decision making and implementation of the federal law to the state level. It calls for state departments of education to develop initiatives and provide technical support to schools and districts that is quite different from the “compliance and assurance” work they did during the No Child Left Behind era.

Since 2016, RRCNA has participated in meetings with state education agency staff tasked with implementing ESSA’s requirements. We share best practices, lessons learned, and strategies to address specific issue areas including evidence-based practices and interventions.

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head state departments of elementary and secondary education in the states.

CCSSO provides opportunities three times a year for states and partner organizations to collaborate and focus on specific topic areas. Currently, RRCNA sends representatives to four special interest groups during these

2-day meetings: English Language Arts, English Learners, Assessing Special Education Students, and School and District Improvement. As partner representatives, we participate in the learning, join in discussions and problem solving, and help facilitate and lead the work. We have the opportunity to share information about literacy processing theory, effective strategies with English learners, comprehensive literacy instruction, high-quality teacher

professional development, and data-based instruction, as well as information about Reading Recovery, Descubriendo la Lectura, and Literacy Lessons. When misinformation supporting simple theories of assessment and reading instruction are put forth, we are able to counter with current research and our deeper understandings of literacy instruction.

RRCNA will continue to seek opportunities to connect and engage with state leaders and education officials.



*Current RRCNA leadership sharing expertise with CCSSO special interest groups are Jeff Williams, president; Judy Johnson, executive director; Amy Smith, vice president; and Lindy Harmon, past president and treasurer.*